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Titusville Amateur Radio Club

# TARC NEWSLETTER

December 1989

## President's Corner

First of all, thanks for the outstanding work done by Bud, Dennis, and Clyde in managing the affairs of the TARC in 1989. Volunteering for an office in a hobby club like ours is an experience in the possibility of getting out more than you put in. If you can stand the criticism, you can derive a lot of satisfaction from helping your club to grow in quantity and quality.

Our club has a fine record of helping out in providing communications for local events, having an exceptionally good field day and operating a superior repeater. Here are a few things that I'd like to see us get done: ARRL affiliation, incorporation, have interesting meetings, get a novice class started, increase membership total, have a picnic and... are we ready to sponsor a North Brevard Hamfest? Take part in these club affairs and be proud to be a member of the TARC. See you at the meeting on the 23rd of January 1990.

## The Editor's Desk
by Doug Reed N4QVY

Hi all. I hope everyone is having a nice holiday season.

As you can see in the upper right, we have a new set of officers in place. As one of the lucky few, I would like to *thank* the nominating committee for their hard work (hi).

As the last newsletter of 1989 (and probably one of the few that came out in December), this is a **Thank You** issue to those that so amply supplied the membership with columns and articles.

First and foremost, Dennis Wren, N4SDI, for providing

See **Desk** on back

## Upcoming Events

> **January 23**, February 27 – next TARC meetings, 7 p.m., JayCees Building on Singleton Ave.
> Every Thursday night – TARC Friendship Net, 7 p.m., 146.91 MHz (–600).
> 3rd Saturday of each month – SBARC / ARRL exams, 9:30 a.m. registration, FIT room Q22 in The Quad (under ham radio mast). For info call Jim Larson, home phone 768–1954 evenings.
> March 23–25, 1990 (tentative) – Orlando Hamcation, Orange County Civic Center (I–4, Exit 29).
> **January 12** – **Deadline** for articles to be included in the January edition of the *TARC Newsletter.*

## Officers

President: Bob Nedimeyer W4VQB 269–1878
Vice Pres: Dick Duell W4LSD 269–1878
Secretary: Doug Reed N4QVY 268–1934
Treasurer: Clyde Lee K4EOS 267–9375

## Minutes of the November 28 Meeting
Submitted by Dennis Wren N4SDI

The meeting was called to order by Bud (K4CWG) at 7:03. He stated that if there were no objections, when the guest speaker arrived the meeting would take a break and allow him to speak.

The minutes were read ,there was one correction made. This was to to add the name of last month's speaker, Sgt Bob Blakeley. The minutes were then accepted. Clyde (K4EOS) reported the treasury had $208.86 in the checking account and $25.01 petty cash. This was accepted.

Bud (K4CWG) brought up that he had some QSL cards from the special event station and that if anyone wanted one they could make a donation. If you do not want to donate you can still have a card. It was brought up that the proposed fee for a ham radio license had been turned down.

Ozzie (N4SCY) said he had sent a letter to the UN about International Space Year, 1992, to see what if anything the club could do to participate.

The speaker for the evening gave a talk on safety from FPL point of view.

After a short break the meeting was called back to order. Bob (W4VQB) brought up that it was election time. Clyde (K4EOS) reported on the nominations of, Bob (W4VKF) for treasurer, Doug (N4QVY) for secretary, Dick (W9LSD) for vice president, and Bob (W4VQB) for president. There were no nominations from the floor so these people were voted in.

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# FADCA Packet Contest Hints and Tips
## by Ozzie Osband – N4SCY

FADCA (Florida Amateur Digital Communications Association) will hold a packet QSO party (contest) from 0000 UTC 30 December to 2400 UTC 30 December 1989. Contestents must exchange first name, county, call, date, and time. There are some things that the rules do not explain in which the following fills this void (the rules to the party can be found on any Florida packet BBS).

**Tip 1** – Include your Node.
The rules of the FADCA Packet QSO Party say that you must exchange first name and county. But you'll be missing a bet if you don't also include the NODE nearest you. Let's say that you've gotten out the Florida Userlist, and connected to a Ham across the state somewhere. Your packets are visible to almost anyone monitoring the channel from any node in between you and him. They'll be able to find you, even if you don't know that they exsist, if you include your Node in your QSO. You can bet that my "macro" will say:

This is Ozzie N4SCY in Brevard via TIX or COA. 73.

**Tip 2** – Twice on one node.
The rules of the FADCA Packet QSO Party say you can run two channels of QSO's at the same time. The next trick is getting connected to the local node twice to try to get more QSO's.

Connect to your local node in the usual way. You can then type "CQ" so that the node will be available for others to connect to you, and know you are there (remember that the rules say you can't call "CQ" more than once in 5 minutes). While waiting for someone to connect to you, you can now change "logical channels" inside your TNC (Terminal Node Controller), and reconnect to the Node. Hit ^C (Control C) to get the "CMD:" prompt. If you have an AEA type TNC, type "| 1" to change from Channel 0 to Channel 1. If you have a Pac–Comm/MFJ type TNC, type "| B" to change to channel B from channel A.

From this new "logical channel", you are still using your same call sign. The next thing is to connect to the local node again, but the TNC won't let you connect to the same call sign again. One neat thing the Node designers allow is a connection to the Node ID, WITH an SSID (Secondary Station IDentifier). So if you connected to ORL1 (the Node in Orlando), you could now connect to ORL1–1, which is a separate call sign to your TNC, and acceptable to the node. The USER command will show you connected to the node twice, once with a CQ hanging out, and again as the new connect

**Tip 3** – Connect to a CQ on a Node.
In our last episode, our hero, the intrepid Ham Radio Packeteer (YOU) had connected twice to the local node, leaving one connection hanging out a welcome mat in the form of a CQ on that local node. Now it's time to go hunting others who've done the same.

You hit the "NODES" command, pick one, and get connected to a remote node. Sure enough, you type "USER", and get back the following:

```
ORL1:WD4HIM-1} NET/ROM 1.3 (658)
Circuit(#OCF1:K4OZS-11 K4GBB          <--->  Downlink(K4GBB-15 WD4HIM)
Circuit(WPK7:WB4HYP-7 N4CHV-3)        <--->  Downlink(N4CHV-12 WD4HIM)
Uplink(K4TSY)                         <~~>   Circuit(NAP5:KC5YD-2 K4TSY)
Uplink(N4PLK)                         <~~>   CQ(N4PLK-15)
Uplink(N4SCY-15)
```

That guy with the CQ hanging out is looking for someone to connect to him. We just have to know to enter "C N4PLK–15" to get connected.

By the way, Uplinks are people who have connected to the node from within the range of thenode (or via a digipeater). Downlinks are people who are going through the Node, and are connecting to a user from there. A circuit is someone who is using the node from a node to reach another node. Where there is a <–->, there is an actual link. The <~~> characters denote a link that has bee requested, but not yet established.

**Tip 4** – Swapping channels.
When you find yourself connected to multiple users at once, it can be confusing. First, you have to ALLOW multiple connects by typing "USERS 2" at the CMD: prompt. You could type in a greater number, but it would be against the rules for the FADCA Packet QSO Party. However, if you should see a "XXX CONNECT REQUEST FROM KB4ABC", be sure to jot down the call. You can go looking for him later. You do NOT have to be at the CMD: prompt to change channels.

You can send a line to one user, hit <CR>, and then the change channel characters (| B or | 1, depending on your TNC – see Tip 2) and continue the conversation with the other guy. You still have to hit ^C to get the CMD: prompt to disconnect. Remember also, that AEA type TNC's start you off on Channel 0.

When at the CMD: prompt, you can type "CS" to Check Status of your available "logical channels". The information will tell you who your TNC is connected to for each channel. That will be the first Node you connect with, in most casses, since the TNC cannot tell who you've told the Node to connect you to.

Be sure to try out all this new–found knowledge, so that you are skilled and practiced before the QSO Party at the end of December.

**Tip 5** – Notifying Others.
To quote from FADCA Packet QSO Party rules:

The use of BBS's during the contest for any purpose related to the contest is prohibited. No means of communications other than packet radio may be used to solicit QSO's during the contest. (The use of packet BBS's prior to the contest to announce "an intention to operate" the contest is allowable.)

The trick here, will be to send useful information around the state, without cluttering up the PBBS's (Packet Bulletin Board systems) BEFORE the contest starts. It would also be nice to be able to FIND the information later, when we need it. Let's look at a PBBS command that will help us with the latter problem, and use it to come up with the answer to the former.

PBBS's have the L (List) command, and there are ways of using it. If you type "L> CONTST", the PBBS will list the message numbers and subjects of this series, since I used the address CONTST@FLA to flood the state with this drivel. Notice that the Greater Than character used as an arrow points TO the call sign you are requesting. If you typed "L< N4SCY" you'd list all messages I've sent that are on your PBBS. That arrow points away from my call sign, which means that it will find all messages from that user.

So let's come up with a method of flooding the state that will 1) inform other users of our "intention to operate", 2) not waste too much space on the PBBS, while 3) being able to find the stuff later. Let's simply send the following:

SB PARTY@FLA Ozzie N4SCY VIA TIX COA /EX

First, we're going to Send a Bulletin. Bulletins can be read by any user and are sent around the state, while Private ("SP" command) only allows the sender, reciever, and of course, the Sysop (System Operator) to read the message. Ham radio being what it is, though, remember that anyone monitering can watch the message being forwarded. ST (Send Traffic) messages can be read by anyone, but are not flodded to the state.

The address will allow us to type "L> PARTY" to get the list of users, and the subject will tell you who, and where to find them. Since I can be reached via either the COA or TIX nodes in Cocoa and Titusville, I place them in the order of closest to farthest. This means you'd have a better chance reaching me from TIX (the strongest link I can make), but if you can only reach COA, then try anyway (since I can usually get a good connection there). The logic here is to list from my station, out to the far distance. By sending "/EX" as the next line, there is no text of the message, but we've said all we need to in the subject.

**Tip 6** – Setting Volume Controls.
The TNC (Terminal node Controller) does not need to have the volume of your radio turned up very loud. One of the best methods for setting it was published Al K4CY in Florida Skip magazine.

Turn the squelch control until the DCD (Data Carrier Detect) light comes on. Then turn the volume control down, untill the light goes out. This means that the volume is too low for the TNC to detect a data signal. Then turn the volume up slowly until the light comes back on. Now that the volume is set, turn the squelch back up until the light goes out.

**Tip 7** – Stacking Node Commands.
There will be ALOT of QRM on the packet frequencies during the FADCA Packet QSO Party. There will be certain information you will want from a distant node that you connect to. You will probably want to do a NODES command to find out what nodes the one you're connected to thinks it can reach, but you'll DEFINITELY want to use the ROUTES command to find out what nodes the one you're connected to can ACTUALLY reach (It's probably best to do this before the contest, so you know where to go, and how to get there).

Rather than send out separate packets with these commands, let's "stack" a bunch of commands in one packet. Ordinarily, the character used to actually send a packet on it's way is the <CR> (Carriage Return) character. We can abbreviate the commands we want to send to a single chracter ("N" for Nodes, "R" for Routes), and use the TNC's "Passthrough" character. When you type ^V (CTRL–V), the following character is taken as more text, and is included in the packet, but it is not yet sent. Instead of sending three small packets, we can send 1 packet that includes all our current requests. We can type:

**N^V<CR> R^V<CR> CQ This is Ozzie in Titusville VIA TIX<CR>**

The ^V character preceeds the <CR>, so it does not terminate the packet, until the one at the end of the CQ (which can only be sent ONCE every 10 minutes, according to contest rules).

Best of luck in the contest.

Permission granted to print this series of Contest Tips in Ham Radio Club Newsletters which accept only local advertising, or no advertising at all. All others must contact the author directly.

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The **TARC Newsletter** is (usually) published on a monthly basis. Articles are published based on their newsworthiness to TARC membership, space available, and ease of entry to the publishing medium.

Preferred transfer methods are EMail to *Doug Reed* at Tech-Talk BBS, EMail on 2 meter packet to N4QVY@KB4LB or N4QVY@WD4HJM, direct packet, 3.5" AmigaDOS 880K disk, 3.5" MS-DOS 360K disk, 5.25" MS-DOS 360K disk, direct landline modem, and print / hand-written / hardcopy formats, in that order. Separate each paragraph with a blank line for ease of re-formatting into a publishing format.

Article / classified deadline is two Fridays prior to the date of the monthly meeting. The next deadline is **January 12**.

Articles may be given to the editor, Doug - N4QVY, at the IHOP on net nights, or left with Bud - K4CWG, where it will hopefully make its way to the aforementioned editor.

The **TARC Newsletter** is assembled on a Commodore Amiga computer using Gold Disk's PageSetter desktop publishing software and output to a PostScript compatible laser printer. Bulk printing service is donated by Brevard Office Equipment, Inc. Folding, stamping, and mailing services are usually 'donated' by Bud (K4CWG), Les (K4SJC), and anyone Bud can slyly talk into *visiting* him. Thanks to all those involved in this maddening once (thank goodness) a month event.

**Minutes...**

It was announced that the Christmas dinner would be at Golden Corral on Dec 12th at 6:30 P.M.. The Jaycees will have a meeting on Nov 30th to plan for the Christmas parade anyone who can is invited to attend. Ozzie (N4SCY) reported that there will be a packet QSO party Dec 30-31. If anyone wants more info contact him.

Happy New Year

**Desk...**

us with the minutes of the previous month's meeting. It's a tough job to stay in place for the sole purpose of recording what everyone is saying, of what motions are on the floor, what's being amended, and what the final vote is for. And to write it all down, typing it on a computer, and sending the finished file to my electronic mailbox on Tech-Talk bulletin board so that I may capture it when I get around to creating the newsletter.

Bud Hughes, K4CWG, for his monthly turnip bloodletting proving that he really was President (no matter what Les said).

Bob Nedimyer, W4VQB, for keeping us notified of who was giving what presentation at the next month's meeting.

Wynn, WB4ZUY, Val, WB4ZUZ, and Oz, N4SCY get an all around **Super-Duper** for the best and most articles. The money's not great, but you get instant response from the readership!

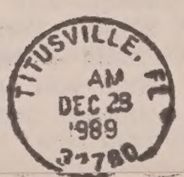
Thanks also to Wayne, KB4YLY, Pike, W4EPU, and Clyde, K4EOS for their articles pertaining to club affairs such as Field Day, Apollo XI Special Events Station, Raft Race, repeater phone status and so on.

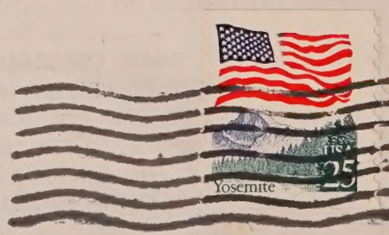
Thanks to Steve Schindler, WD4MJJ, for his Project DOVE article. Also to Pike (again), Lloyd, KA4LTK, and Ed Reinert, N4TLS for your articles and prose.

Last (and definitely not least), much thanks to Sherry Hughes for her footwork when the OM would call the XYL and offer her the promise of fame and fortune to take the finished 'proofs' to Brevard Office Equipment for the 200 copies that gets divided between the club and handouts. So, Sherry, here's the fame (you'll have to see Bud for any fortune).

If I've missed anyone (like the folders and stamp lickers), I apologize and thank you as well. And keep those great articles coming. The club and I appreciate them!

Antenna / Tower Party at Bill Hoskinson's (WA4CUO) place, 2231 Alexander Dr. this Saturday (December 30) at 9 a.m. Call Les (K4SJC) for details.

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73 GL ES GUD DX de TARC !